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ABSTRACT

If teachers do not determine children's understandings and beliefs the children cannot be challenged. Five individual units are presented that have the intention of drawing out the underlying beliefs that children hold with respect to various aspects of science. "Skateboard News" is a newsletter which discusses aspects of skateboards and skateboarding. It focuses on tapping children's conceptions of force and motion. "What Happened Last Night" is a short story about a child and alien from space. The reader answers questions about the Earth and other celestial bodies. "The Day We Cooked Pancakes at School" is a cartoon concerning two student cooks who wonder about the changes happening to their mixture. The reader is asked to offer reasons for the changes. "Children's Week" is a role play based on the idea of the reader being 'teacher for the day' during Children's Week science lessons. This focuses on tapping children's conceptions of light and its properties, and the processes of sight. "Our School Garden" is a cartoon about two children cleaning up part of the schoolyard to make a vegetable garden. Several times during the clean-up, the children argue and puzzle over what is happening. The reader is asked to comment. (PR)

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